

HOW TO TEACH KIDS MEDITATION FOR EVERY DAY HAPPINESS



- ***In a society of competition, constant stress, over-stimulation through media, and perhaps bullying at school, it can be a challenge to keep kids health and happy. That's why I wanted to create this guide to teaching kids to meditate.***
- I've been teaching and writing about meditation for ten years. In that time I've taught and / or been read by over a million people. I've also helped thousands of parents to teach meditation to their children. I know from first hand experience that meditation is immensely beneficial to children. And I would love to help you to get your kids meditating today.
- Let's get started.

Your children will be happier and healthier when they meditate, says science.

Scientific research has proven that kids today have more pressure and stress today than in any other generation in history.

"The stress of getting good grades, high scores on standardized tests, and accepted at top-ranked colleges doesn't encourage happy family dynamics," says [developmental psychologist Marilyn Price-Mitchell Ph.D.](#) And younger children may be suffering stress without you being aware of it. "It's not always easy to recognize when kids are stressed out, but short-term behavioral changes — such as mood swings, acting out, changes in sleep patterns, or bedwetting — can be indications. Some kids have physical effects, including stomachaches and headaches," says [KidsHealth](#).

Put simply, kids are under too much pressure. And it is affecting their health.

For caring parents, meditation offers a way to help children to manage their stress and emotions. And it can also help to correct any behavioral issues.

But is meditation safe for kids?

You definitely should consult a doctor or healthcare professional before beginning. And do ask whether meditation is right for *your* child, based on your child's individual needs.

To a Western audience meditation does sound a bit serious for kids. And many parents will doubtlessly worry about having their kids meditate. But if you look at the [health benefits of meditation](#), it is easy to see how meditation might help your kids. [Meditation helps kids develop focus](#) and [regulate their own emotions](#). And when you start teaching your kids to meditate, you will give them a tool they can use to stay [mentally strong and healthy](#).

Meditation can be very helpful for kids with ADHD or behavioral issues

There are more than 110 proven health benefits of meditation. The following, however, are some of the most important benefits of meditation for kids.

- Meditation helps children to [develop their focus and attention](#). It can, for instance, be very helpful for children with ADHD, though it is also helpful for focus and attention in general.
- There is mounting [evidence](#) that meditation helps kids with ADHD. A 2004 study showed that kids who practiced meditation with their parents in a clinical setting twice a week and then continued to practice at home had improved attention span and focus. Studies have also shown that [mindfulness](#) helps improve children's focus too. In one study, teens and their parents completed a mindfulness program and reported fewer stress levels and fewer ADHD symptoms, such as impulsiveness and emotional reactivity.
- Meditation removes negative thoughts along with worries. It can help teens overcome the stress associated with peer pressure. By teaching meditation to kids you help them to be positive and to avoid negativity.
- Meditation offers numerous important health benefits, including boosting the immune system and helping with breathing.
- It boosts present-moment mindfulness.

These are just a selection of the ways meditation can help your children. I recommend reading this [complete list of health benefits to see how meditation can help your child](#).



If you have decided to teach your kids meditation, then there are some important things to know.



A few tips on teaching kids to meditate

It is a little harder to teach children to meditate than it is to teach adults. But it is a thoroughly worthwhile endeavor, and one your children will thank you for later on in life, when they are calmer and more emotionally balanced than those who do not meditate.

Here are some tips that will help you.

For starters, make sure that you yourself know and understand meditation. I've written a guide to the [basics of meditation](#). Even if you have meditated for years it is worth taking a look at those notes just to double check that you're getting everything right.

Go slow even if you're kid is a genius. If you rush you'll be in danger of giving your child incorrect information. So go slow and make sure that your kids know precisely what they are doing when they meditate.

Only do the basic meditation techniques. There might be [700 different meditation techniques](#), but only a handful of them are suitable for kids. The basic techniques

like [Nine Round Breathing](#), [counting the breath](#), and [Zen sitting meditating](#) are all good places to start.

Do not expect them to be Zen masters. I know that you guys are generally very good parents, but some parents do put too much pressure on kids. If your kids aren't that good at meditating to begin with; hey, no biggie, give them time. Develop your practice slowly. Maybe your kids can only focus for a couple of minutes to begin with. That's great. Next time they might go three minutes, then four. I recommend you set a meditation timer to just a few minutes the very first time. See if your kids can focus for a short amount of time. You can always increase the time later. And to help you out, I've created a [free online meditation timer](#) for you to use.

The Best Meditations For Kids

Naturally you're probably wondering what the best meditation techniques are for kids.

There are a few meditation techniques that I personally recommend. But remember to ask your family healthcare provider for advice before starting.

Here are my favorite meditations for kids.

1. Ten minute mindfulness meditation for children

This is a very simple mindfulness meditation for children, and it's one of the best ways to start teaching meditation to kids.

Begin by asking your son or daughter to adopt the right position, either sitting or lying down. It doesn't matter precisely what position they take, but make sure they are comfortable and not fidgeting. You 'll find this [introduction to meditation positions very helpful](#).

Once your son or daughter is comfortable, continue with these instructions.

1. Ask your child to close their eyes and focus on their breathing. They should do so for a couple of minutes.
2. Now, ask them to focus on what they are hearing. It may help if you ask them to describe, in detail, the sounds they are hearing. This makes them tune in to the sounds around them, which will cause them to focus on the present moment.
3. Now ask them to pay attention to the sensation of touch. Have them describe that they can feel (for instance, wind on the face, soft grass at their feet etc).

4. Now ask them to focus on scents. How does the air smell? Are there any other scents they are aware of? etc.

5. Now move to taste and repeat.

6. Finally, ask them to open their eyes and simply *look* around. You may ask them to focus on light, on shades and on other visuals to make them mindful of sight.

The purpose of this meditation exercise is to make your kids more aware of the present moment and to help them to focus on one thing at a time (in the exercise they focus on the sense one at a time). In this age of constant stimulation, many children (and adults) struggle to focus. This technique boosts focus and concentration by asking your kids to just zone in on one thing at a time.

2. Mindful Breathing

Another great meditation for kids is mindful breathing. In Buddhism this is called Anapanasati. I've created a complete [guide to Anapanasati meditation](#) to help you get started. I recommend you try it for yourself before introducing it to your kids. Breathing meditation / Anapanasati is often the best place to start with any sort of meditation practice, so it's ideal for adult meditators as well as kids.

1. Ask your child to sit comfortably with good posture and to close their eyes.
2. Bring their attention to the sensation of their breath coming and going through the space between their mouth and nose.
3. Ask your child to place both their hands on their stomach and to feel their breath rising and falling from there.
4. You may also ask them to repeat a simple word as they breathe in and out, saying "In" on in-breaths and "Out" when exhaling.
5. Work in cycles of five breaths. Have them count five breaths and then ask them to be aware of any thoughts or feelings in their mind.
6. If they are experiencing thoughts or feelings,, ask them to let go and to return their attention to their breath.

3. Mindful Listening

A lot of kids good could use some help with their listening skills. This meditation will do just that. Not only is a great way to start teaching kids to meditation, but it is a good listening exercise too.

1. Begin by having your child focus their attention on their breath for a few minutes.
2. Explain to your child that they are going to hear a sound and that they should focus on the sound as it gets quieter and quieter.
3. Ask them to nod their head when they can no longer hear that sound.
4. Start playing some relaxing sounds. For instance, you might like to use a [Tibetan singing bowl](#) or an alternative source of what I call "Zen Sounds"--sounds that produce inner calm. Or you could use our free [meditation music](#).
5. Gradually quieten the sound. When they nod their head (saying they can no longer hear it) have them count five breaths again.
6. Repeat this exercise a few times.

The purpose of this exercise is to increase your kids' auditory awareness while also quieting their minds. Because they are focusing on listening to a quiet sound they will naturally stop a lot of the mental noise that they may have. This produces mental peace and inner silence. And it is also a good way to improve your kids listening skills.



4. Mindful Eating

When I was going through a particularly stressful time in my younger life (my parents were going through a rough patch) I started mindless gorging on candy. So I'm definitely not about to just anyone for mindless eating. However, there are a lot of benefits to eating slowly and mindfully. That's why I recommend you teach your kids to eat mindfully.

1. When children are aware of what they are eating they are less likely to gorge on candies and more likely to make healthy choices. This exercise helps.
2. Gather some food into a plate or bowl—be sure that the food is not in its wrapper as this produces unwanted noise.
3. Have your child count to five breaths.

4. Now ask your child to be mindful of the food on the plate, being aware of the feeling, the image and the scent of the food. If they are holding cutlery you may ask them to be mindful of that too.
5. Ask your child to take a small portion of the food and to eat it slowly while focusing on the taste. Ideally, they will chew slowly and will focus on the activity of eating.
6. Once they have finishing eating ask them to describe the taste and feeling of the food.
7. Finally, have your child take five mindful breaths and repeat this exercise. If you would like to learn more about this exercise, please read my [complete guide to mindful eating](#).

This exercise will achieve a lot. It will make your kids more mindfully, generally. It will make them more aware of what they are eating, which is a fantastic trait not just for kids but for adults too. It will put them more in touch with their senses. And it will help them to focus. This one is a total win / win.

5. Walking

Walking is one of the traditional meditation exercises in Zen Buddhism and is a great exercise for children. I've created a complete guide to [Zen Walking](#) to help you get started. But let's take a look at some specific notes for kids.

1. Take a short walk with your kid(a) (somewhere safe, naturally)
2. Ask them to focus on the sensation of movement in their feet and legs.
3. If your child shows a lack of concentration at any time, stop walking and have them count five breaths.
4. You may like to extend this mindfulness exercise by focusing on the sensations related to walking.
5. Ask your child to be mindful of their clothing, or the feeling of wind on their skin or of another singular aspect of walking.

6. Play

In this mindfulness exercise, kids play a fun game like finger-painting, using a sand table, or a similar activity.

1. Once again, begin with awareness of breath.
2. Now tell your child that they can play in whatever way they like but with one condition: they must be mindful of everything they do. Whatever they choose to do during play, they must focus on it absolutely, as we do when meditating.
3. Ask your child to be aware of all five senses, being mindful of taste, touch, sight, sound and hearing.

4. Once again, if your child loses focus, use five mindful breaths to regain their attention.

This is a fantastic exercise to use if your kid is struggling to focus. It is more fun and active, so they have something to keep them occupied, and the meditation is secondary and subtle, so it will help them without being too much of a challenge.



7: Meditating on Art

1. Many children love painting and drawing, both of which can easily be turned into meditation practice.
2. Find an object that your child wants to draw or paint.
3. Now ask them to observe every aspect of the object for a few minutes.
4. Ask them to describe the shape of the object, the feeling, and so on. This encourages them to practice mindfulness.
5. They can then draw or paint the object, but they must focus absolutely on the object while they create their art.

8: Mindful Cooking

1. If you've tried my [Zen Cooking exercise](#) you've probably noticed how fun and mentally stimulating cooking can be.
2. Cooking can be a great exercise for kids too.
3. This is an excellent way to get a child to learn two important things: meditation and cooking.
4. Get hold of a fun and simple recipe that your child might like to cook (some healthy cookies, for instance).

5. Gather the ingredients, along with any utensils you need.
6. You're going to be cooking with your child while teaching them mindfulness meditation. To do this:
7. Have your child fully investigate the feeling, smell and taste of the food (presuming the food is in an edible state, naturally).
8. At every step in the cooking process, ask your child to be mindful of a) the ingredients, b) any work they are doing, and c) the process of change that is happening to the food.

This mindfulness exercise boosts present-moment mindfulness, encourages kids to be more mindful of what they are eating, and teaches them to cook, all at the same time.

9: Music

A very enjoyable way to teach your children to meditate is with music. This is actually how I personally learnt mindfulness myself, all those many, many years ago. I played piano and would meditate on the music I was creating. But don't worry, you do not need a musical instrument for this exercise.

1. Find a tune that your child can hum or sing.
2. Ask them to learn the tune.
3. Ask them to recite it to you.
4. Ask them to focus on the music 100% while they recite it.

What matters in this exercise is not the quality of the music, but your child's ability to focus absolutely on the sounds they are creating.

Not only does this exercise make your kids more aware of sound, it also enhances mind-body connection. By focusing on the movements of their body while they perform the music, your child connects with their body in the present moment, boosting present moment mindfulness.

10: Inform other parents and have group meditation sessions

This final exercise is simple but powerful.

Meditation is much more effective when practiced in a group. I highly recommend informing your friends about meditation for children, and arranging group sessions.

I've personally been advocating meditation to both teachers and parents for several years and let me tell you, it is a truly worthwhile cause. Not only does it help both parents, teachers and kids to relax and focus, but it creates a strong, supportive group that in itself is immensely beneficial.

When your children meditate, they will boost both their happiness and health. And when you meditate with them, you will too.

THIS PDF WAS CREATED FOR [THE DAILY MEDITATION](#).